

To the Ladies and Gentlemen of Montana,

The Samoyed Club of America and her 1700 members, **OPPOSE** the **Breeder Bills** proposed in Montana, to include HB 548 and any related 'Puppy Mill' or 'Breeder' bills. We do have members that are constituents.

"Showing" dogs is the second highest sport for number of people attending and involved. We are only behind Little League nationally.

Our position is that breeder laws impact the best breeders, which include our members, and leave untouched the substandard facilities. Those 'bad' breeders then hide even more and thus take more resources to uncover. There is no increase in care that is provided by draconian legislation, but what does happen is the 'gold standard' of breeder, our members and others like them, stop breeding in a state with laws such as we've seen proposed.

Bills such as this will not stop abusers.

The effect on an industry

These severely restrictive breeding regulations hurt hobby breeders, and effectively will kill hobby breeding in Montana. Most dedicated hobbyists keep their dogs into old age and can easily have the half a dozen animals at various ages. One litter can be a dozen puppies, so '20' is basically 2 litters of puppies. **These are anti breeding bills, NOT bills targeted at substandard breeders.**

Hobbyists are not the problem. Unannounced home visits are just not something people will accept. Dedicated dog enthusiasts often move out of state to escape excessive oversight, not because there is something wrong with how they raise puppies, but because law abiding people will not tolerate invasion of privacy.

The effect on tourism

The Pet industry is a \$43 Billion dollar industry in the US, ranked 8th largest retail industry (above movies, music and video games). 39% of all homes own at least one dog, according to CNBC, who did the show prior to Westminster, and also stated that approximately 3.4 million watch the Westminster airing.

For those who pursue event participation with their dogs, such as what you see at Westminster, AKC offers show, field trial, agility, obedience, and lure coursing, among other venues. While there are many non AKC events and hunting dog trials, these are the AKC event numbers for MT:

2006- 70 events, 19,067 dogs participated
2007- 75 events, 19,926 dogs participated
2008- 83 events, 17,291 dogs participated

Totals: 56,284 dogs participated in 228 events in Montana over the past 3 years.

Each dog, basically a pet, is accompanied by one or two people. Average outstate entrants traveling to Montana will bring \$300 per weekend into the state with their dog hobby. "Dog people" travel hundreds of miles to enjoy their sport.

These are the estimates of dollars into our state per size of dog event:

less than 1,000 entries \$319,200
1,000 to 2500 entries \$588,000
greater than 2500 entries \$1,075,200

So here are the MT tourism estimates using the smallest estimates (-1000 entries):

2006 --- \$22,344,000

2007 --- \$23,940,000

2008 --- \$26,493,600

Dog people are very aware of what the laws are and are starting to boycott the states with severely restrictive laws.

We are seeing this in Louisville which passed a bad dog ordinance where a dog accidentally lost could be returned spayed or neutered. Dog show enthusiasts actively boycott those shows SOLELY due to the prevailing laws. The show still exists, but at much diminished levels and people are careful not to spend ANY money inside the city limits for gas, food or hotel.

This is a growing industry. There are many dog events, and these AKC events that bring in a total of over \$73 million to the state in the past 3 years. We hope you agree that this is an industry worth supporting, not legislating out of existence.

We hope you can find a way to enforce the laws on the books and join us in **OPPOSING HB 548** and any similar anti breeder legislation.

Sincerely yours,

Susan Black
Legislative Chair
Samoyed Club of America
AKC Legislative Liaison